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ABSTRACT

The guide describes in detail seven curriculum materials appropriate for the Christian education of children with special needs (defined as children for whom many curriculum materials do not work effectively). The materials included were judged to work well with the child not able to learn or keep up or to function well with the lesson materials as it is presented in the ordinary Sunday School or religious education class. Materials were identified through conversations and communications with church groups and staff workers. Materials are evaluated in terms of 10 aspects (sample subtopics in parentheses): bibliographic information, instructional area and skills scope sequence; component parts of the materials (ease of modification, independent use of parts); level of the material (readability level, interest level, comprehension level); quality (nature of illustrations, cost); format (special equipment, clear directions); support materials (availability); time requirements (flexibility for scheduling); field tests and research data; and method, approach, or theoretical bases (compatibility with ongoing instruction). Included with the document is a list of strategies for individualizing and adapting activities for special needs children. (CL)

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MATERIALS EVALUATION

FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

by Linda Schaefer
December 1, 1983

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

PROBLEM:

There are many curriculum materials provided for the Christian education of "normal" children. There are also many children for whom these materials do not work as effectively as the teacher or parent might hope. For one reason or another, the child is not able to learn or keep up or function well with the lesson material or plan as it is presented in the ordinary Sunday School or religious education class. In order to ameliorate this situation, both suggestions for the individualization of regular materials and special materials have been developed. This paper seeks to describe and evaluate some of these materials.

METHOD:

Through correspondance and conversation a number of widely used special Christian Educational materials were selected. These were evaluated in accordance with the following format. This format is comprosed of the evaluations indicated in Teaching Children with Learning and Behavior Problems by Donald D. Hammill and Nettie R. Bartel, and Christian Education for Emotionally-Disturbed Children by Alan Keith-Lucas. The questions above the line in each section are from Hammill and Bartel and those below the line are from Keith-Lucas. (See section titled, "Evaluation of Materials")

The current publication from the Division of Education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches includes listings of General Resources in the area of Special Learning Needs and also bibliographies for people with Emotional Disturbance, the Gifted and Talented, Hearing Impaired, Learning Disabilities, Mental retardation, Physical Handicaps, Social Handicaps, and Visual Handicaps. They list audio-visuals; printed books, pamphlets and packets; program resources; and agencies for each area. This listing was published in October 1982 by the Office of Special Learning Needs, Education for Christian Life and Mission, Division of education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches, Room 706, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

The Board for Parish Services of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has published a set of 18 Bulletins called the Special Education Series. Each of these bulletins (about 10 to 20 pages in length) is prepared to teach members of congregations how to observe, recognize and deal appropriately with special educational needs. For example, bulletin SE 6 is "I Don't Have Any Students Like That in My Class...Do I?" and deals with children with learning disabilities. It covers the following topics: 1) Exactly What Are Learning Problems?
2) What are the symptoms of Learning Disabilities?
3) If I think there's a problem, what then?
4) What about the "Special Needs" student in my classroom?
5) Sample evaluation form
6) Supplemental Materials
7) Advocacy and support groups
8) Strategies for individualizing and adapting activities (a copy of some of these suggestions for individualizing materials has been included following the evaluation questions used for this paper.)

Conversations with those working in the field of Special Christian Education confirm that the materials evaluated are those being used in many areas. An additional resource person was the staff at Bethesda Lutheran Home.

EVALUATION OF MATERIALS

I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title:
Author:
Copyright:
Price:
Publisher:

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

1. Does the material cover the content area of specific components of the area?
2. Does the material present initial instruction, remediation, and practice and/or reinforcement activities for the skills?
3. Does it address the specific skills needed?
4. Are the skills presented in the appropriate sequence?
5. Is each skill given an equal amount of coverage?

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6. Does it recognize God's care an love and his concern for every individual?
7. Are references to God's justice and righteousness suitable to the learner?
8. Does it emphasize God's mercy and forgiveness?
9. Does it show Jesus as interested in all persons- the sick, the bad, the unpopular and wanting them to have a more abundant life?
10. Are there specific skills that can be identified as components of the concepts?
11. Is there some sort of a "scope and sequence" chart or other breakdown of concepts to be taught?

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

1. Are there multiple pieces to the materials?
2. Can the pieces be used independently?
3. Can the pieces be used for other purposes?
4. Are there consumable pieces?
5. Can the pieces be purchased independently?
6. Will it be a problem to keep track of all the components?

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7. Can the materials themselves be easily modified to meet the needs of learners?
8. Are required response modalities to the materials appropriate to your learners?

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

1. Does the publisher state the readability level of the material?
2. Is it consistant throughout the material?
3. Is there more than one book for each level?
4. Is there an attempt to control the content-specific vocabulary?
5. Is the interest level appropriate to the content, pictures, and publisher's statements?

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6. Are the materials suited to the learner in view of his/her:
   a. chronological age?
   b. level of comprehension?
   c. range of skills?
   d. special needs?
7. Are the purposes realistic to the needs of the learner?

V. QUALITY

1. I the material (e.g., paper, tape, acetate, film, etc.) of good and durable quality?

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2. Is the print clear and of appropriate size and contrast with the background?
3. Are the illustrations clear and relevant to the content?
4. Do they add rather then detract from the instruction?

5. Are the stories well written, interesting and accurate?
6. Is the cost reasonable for what you get?

VI. FORMAT

1. Is the format appropriate (i.e., workbook, slide-tape, etc.)?
2. Does it utilize the appropriate receptive and expressive modes for the content?
3. Is the material clear and easy to follow?
4. Are there special equipment needs required?

5. Will it work with your environmental limitations?
6. Are there clear directions for teaching procedures?
7. Are teachers given a variety of choices for materials and procedures for developing the units?
8. Is there an evaluation procedure built into the unit plan?

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

1. Are there additional components beyond the child-use instructional items (e.g., placement tests, resource files, objective clusters)?
2. Are there teacher's guides and/or teacher's editions?
3. Are there teacher training materials?

4. Are support materials readily available?

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

1. Are the tasks of an appropriate length?
2. Does the material allow flexibility for scheduling?
3. Does it allow flexibility in instructional procedures?

4. Are time requirements appropriate for:
   a. teacher preparation?
   b. class length?
   c. student preparation?

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

1. Does the publisher offer any research that would support the validity or reliability of the material?
2. Are there any data to support either process or product studies?
3. In essence, do the data support the contentention that the material will do what the publisher says it will do for the type of student indicated?

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

1. Does the material utilize a specific approach or method, or is it based on a specific theoretical concept?
2. Is it one that meets the needs of the curricular-student-teacher triad?
3. Is it compatible with other ongoing instruction?
4. Is the method, approach, or basic theory substantiated by any published research?

(METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASIS cont'd)

5. Are the activities and content free of particular denominational point of view or agree with the denominational background and preference of every member of the group?
6. Are there a variety of methods suggested?
7. Do activites suggest:
   a. doing?
   b. seeing?
   c. making?
   d. dramatizing?
   e. experimenting?
   f. using all senses?
   g. group activities?
   h. individual activities?
   i. singing?
   j. experiencing repition and routine?
8. Is the method of teaching one that the teacher is eomfortable with?

SUMMARY

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STRATEGIES FOR INDIVIDUALIZING AND ADAPTING ACTIVITIES

MATERIALS

1. Enlarge print.
2. Reduce distraction on page.
3. Utilize pictures and illustrations.
4. Cut materials apart.
5. Enlarge spaces in which student responds.
6. Enlarge space between words and sentences.
7. Enlarge space between lines
8. Modify vocabulary.
9. Underline information in books.
10. Cut papers in half.
11. Provide manipulatives.
12. Tape record materials.
13. Color code materials.
14. Utilize arrows for directionality.
15. Locate information by coding
16. Trace pictures or shapes.
17. Trace shapes or lines.
18. Trace words.
19. Create more appealing materials through color.

DIRECTIONS

1. Provide examples with directions.
2. Simplify directions.
3. Specify task/item.
4. Student repeats directions.
5. Students rewrites directions in own words.
6. Clarify expectations.

MOTIVATION

1. Provide reasons for learning.
2. Student participates in the development of tasks.
3. Utilize student/teacher developed games.

REINFORCEMENT

1. Reinforce successive approximations.
2. Reinforce learning of goals.
3. Utilize peer teaching (models).
4. Utilize adult help.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

1. Utilize a variety of teaching modalities.
2. Change modality of materials
3. Utilize several modalities simultaneously.
4. Put similar topics in learning center.
5. Develop method for listing concepts.
6. Utilize directive questioning
7. Encourage divergent thinking.
8. Increase repetition.
9. Integrate subject matter
10. Elaborate/extend task.
11. Relate to past learning.
12. Begin with concrete & go to abstract.
13. Add concrete domonstration.
14. Teach task vocabulary.

FEEDBACK

1. Give immediate feedback and reinforcement.
2. Provide feedback to parents/staff.
3. Student self-corrects work for immediate feedback.

STUDENT RESPONSE

1. Respond to multiple modalities.
2. Change mode of response.

EVALUATION

1. Utilize positive grading system.
2. Utilize progress assessment.
3. Provide alternative evaluation procedure.

quoted from:
Special Education Series: Individualizing Instruction. Bulletin NO. 83782. Board of Parish Services. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 133 South Kirkwood Rd St. Louis, MO 63122.

RESULTS:

I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

Title: Life of Christ, Volume 1 and 2
Author: Claire K. Hamiliton
Copyright: originally 1947 (Has been updated and is currently published)
Price: Volume 1 - $6.35
Volume 2 - $6.35
Review charts $ .95
Memory Tokens Vol. 1 - 50 for $1.75
Vol. 2 - 50 for $2.25
Publisher: Child Evangelism Fellowship Press

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE.

Taken together, volume 1 and 2 of the Life of Christ cover the major events in the life of Jesus. The material is designed to present initial instruction to the learner about Jesus' life, work, purpose, and aquaint him/her with the significant happenings in Christ's life. The materials are designed to encourage remembering and using the facts that are learned. "Skills" are not taught in the usual sense that they are in such subjects as writing or math. There are suggestions for increasing the attending and memory skills of the learner and for language, sequencing, and comprehension to increase. The sequence of the stories follows the order of the events in the life of Christ, which is apporpriate. Events are given equal amounts of coverage.

There is an emphasis on God's care and love and his concern for every individual. References to God's judgement and righteousness are suitable to teaching children. Such references are not overly stressed or given in such a way as to make the learner fearful, but to understand the good news of God's mercy to us. The emphasis is on God's mercy and forgiveness. The events selected clearly demonstrate his desire for each to have a more abundant life. The story-board lay-outs also function as a scope and sequence chart for the stories taught.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL.

The materials consist of a Teacher's manual for each volume, large brightly colored flannelgraph figures for each person and item of each story, a chart of layouts and sequences for each story, and additional review and memory aids if these are desired. There are also related items such as visualized songs which correspond to the storiesavailable. Any of these pieces can be used independently or together to give as much detail as is appropriate for your class. The figures are easily adapted as supplements to other materials dealing with the life of Christ. They would not be appropriate for teaching "modern day" stories as they are all "Bible people". The memory tokens are consumable. The figures will last indefinitely if they are given appropriate care. It is possible to purchase items independently. Keeping track of the items requires some sort of filing system, but nothing elaborate. (A large flat box and plastic bags do nicely.) The use of the materials can be easily modified to meet the special needs of the learners. For example, backgrounds can be used or eliminated depending on age and perceptions of learners. The materials are highly visual and need to be seen by the learner. Other modalities such as auditory and kinesthetic use are secondary. However, the figures are large and bright enough that even the learner with visual impairments may be able to use them.

IV. LEVEL OF MATERIAL

No reading is required on the part of the learner. Although the Scripture references are given if learners want to look them up, Bible verse memory work is also done with picture helps as well as in written form and can be learned by non-readers. The stated ages for which the material was intended are from five years to eleven years old. Suggestions are given for adapting the material and language to the age and comprehension level of the learners. There is an explanation of "God talk" when it is introduced. On the whole the material is in everyday English rather than theological jargon. Interest level is appropriate to the content, pictures, and publisher's statements. The materials can easily be used with learners who are older chronologically and younger mentally than their peers. The level of comprehension can be regulated by the teacher's vocabulary in conjunction with the figures. Differential use of the figures for a wide range of learner skills is possible. Special student needs can be accomodated. The purposes of the materials are realisitic to the needs of the learners.

V. QUALITY

The materials are made of good paper and the colors are bright. The figures are also larger than the average ones of this type which is very helpful. They are much easier to workwith and for the learners to see. The illustrations are traditional and relevant and add to the stories. The stories are scriptural neither adding to nor deleting from the text. The cost is very reasonable for what you get.

VI. FORMAT

The format of using figures to tell stories, review them and manipulate or retell the story is appropriate. There are no workbooks or paper and pencil tasks. This format works well with any student who is visually oriented and can be used with any student able to see a picture as a representation of a person or object. it is not designed for blind learners or for those who for one reason or another can not comprehend pictures. The figures and sequences are clear and easy to follow. The only equipment required is a flannel board which can be teacher made or purchased from CEF or other suppliers. This material can be used in any location. There are clear porcedures suggested for teaching. There are a variety of choices for the teacher. The "review" charts can be used for evaluation purposes.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

There are other related materials available for the teacher including music, teacher training and studies, related lessons, and information. The original plan and structure of these materials was used in a "Good News Club". There is a built-in teacher training and support and sharing group required for participation . Additional materials and suggestions are provided. Resources are made available and questions are answered. While the teacher's guide is provided with the material, the teacher's group also gives the opportunity for experienced teachers to share ideas with one another and with new teachers. The CEF Director is also available to help deal with any problems which arise in any given class in her area and to act as a resource person for the teacher.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

Lessons are an apprpriate length. While as suggested schedule is provided, it is possible to change the class schedule to suit your own needs. You can be as flexible as you wish.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

These materials have been field tested. Specific data is not given in the materials themselves, but can be obtained from the publishers. There are also annual reports that demonstrate the effectiveness of the material. (They are more like testimonials than the experimental model kind of data, however. For this reason they do not constitute "proof" of effectiveness.) Given the type of subject area, I feel they support the contention that the materials will do what the publisher says it will do for the type of students indicated.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES.

The material is based on the theory that the Bible is the written word of God, and that learning the stories it presents about Jesus is a valid way to grow spiritually. It is based on the statement that John makes that "these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31) It does not teach doctrine as such, though many doctrines are learned from the stories. It meets the curricular-student-teacher triad for this type of content. It is compatible with other types and areas of instruction. The substantiation again is one of testimony rather than scientific research.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: John of Beverly series B New Testament - Life of Christ
Author: Elizabeth Foster
Copyright: 1979
Price: free from Mill Neck Foundation, Inc. (donation requested)
Publisher: Mill Neck Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 100 (This is the support group for the Lutheran
Mill Neck, N.Y. 11765 School for the deaf at
Mill Neck.)

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The material covers highlights of the life of Jesus, including the angel appearing to Mary to announce Christ's birth through Pentecost. The first four lessons cover: the Bible, Worship, Prayer, and Thanksgiving. There are twenty actual lessons on the life of Jesus. The material presents initial instruction, practice and activities that are related to learning the sequence of events in the stories, the vocabulary needed to tell the story in the simplest way possible, and reinforcement of the main idea of the story. It identifies the goal of each lesson and the skills needed to reach it. These are appropriately sequenced. Equal coverage is given to each goal.

The emphasis is on God's love and care and his concern for every individual. And reference to God's justice or tightousness is presented with consideration of his mercy and forgiveness. It shows Jesus as interested in all persons, good and bad. It emphasizes his desire for every one to share in his abundant life. The specific skills needed to understand the concepts are identified and suggestions given to teach these. While there is no scope and sequence chart given as such, it is easy to look at the goals of each lesson which in fact give the scope and sequence for the series. These are printed in large type at the beginning of each lesson and are easy to find at a glance.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

The materials include a teacher's book, teacher's packet (consisting of teaching pictures, word charts, and prayer cards), children's leaflet for each lesson, and paper craft activity for each session, The teacher's book also notes all materials that are needed for each session. The packet does not include such items as a Bible pencils, tape, scissors, crayons, pocketchart, etc. which are normallly readily axailable in the class room. The lesson materials may be used independently or together as planned. They may be used to supplement other lessons. The student packets are consumable. Student packets may be obtained one at a time or separately from teacher's packets, but individual items of a packet can not be sent for. All material is standard 8½ x 11 inch in size and fits into a notebook or file. The materials are easily modified to meet special needs of the learner. Expected student responses include reading, tracing, circling words, writing, and saying or signing answers, prayers, verses, etc. Cutting and pasting and coloring is used in the activities.

IV. LEVEL OF MATERIAL

This Life of Christ series is at the entry level of the primary deaf child. The reading level is grade one with large primary size type and one inch dotted letters for tracing responses written by students. The level is consistent throughout the material. There are additional books at this level if more work is required. There is an extensive effort to control the vocabulary used and to teach the vocabulary needed to the student. Since the material was designed for deaf students, there is no assumption that the student will have a working English

vocabulary. The interest level, content, pictures and examples appeal to students who are older chronologically then the first grade, but need first grade vocabulary in reading and writing. In fact, these materials can be used with any age person needing beginning level reading. They do not look "childish".

V. QUALITY

The paper is good quality. The print is clear and easy to read, being primary (sight-saving) size. The illustrations are clear line drawings. There is no color used. (Students may color leaflets if they so desire.) They illustrate the content well. They are not outstanding art, however. They do aid understanding the content of the lessons. The stories are well written, interesting and accurate but much simplified renderings of the original Bible stories. Each is told with the most simple sentence construction and vocabulary possible.

VI. FORMAT

The format of student leaflets, activity pages, and teacher packet is easy to use and appropriate to the material. It utilizes appropriate receptive and expressive modes for teaching and responding to the lesson content. Both the student material and teacher material is easy to follow. No special equipment is needed. All materials needed for the lessons is either provided or listed in the teacher packet for easy access. This material would be easy to use in any setting. There are adequate suggestions to provided the teacher with a variety of easy to follow procedures. There is immediate evaluation of recall of the lesson in the leaflet, but longer term tests are not provided.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

Teacher packets include illustrations for all lessons, song and prayer charts, descriptions of children's packet contents, directions for all activities, materials needed, lesson outlines and helps, and additional notes. The goal of each lesson is spelled out and emphasized. There is also a video tape available for the teacher to see the materials in use with students, This is available on request from Mill Neck.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

Tasks are of appropriate length. Flexibility in scheduling is no problem. The materials can be used to suppliment other materials or other materials can be used with these as need arises. They are set up to correspond with the school year, but this is not necessary to using them. You may spend more or less time as suits your students.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

The materials have been developed, tested and revised since 1960. I know that extensive testing and responses from the field went into preparing them. (I saw early work and questionaires used in field tests.) The current publication does not list the actual data. It would be available from the foundation.

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X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The method used is to present a story or concept from the Bible using the "total communication" approach, (using all possible means - say, sign, write, draw, dramatize, etc.) let the learner interact with the story, then use games and activities to help remember, use, and recall the content. This method is compatible with the curricular-student-teacher triad. It fits in easily with other ongoing instruction. This method is well substantiated by research in areas other than Religious Education. It also works in this field.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: Bible Lessons for Special Classes - Series III
Author: (Board for Parish Education Staff) no individual named.
Copyright: not listed.
Price: Teacher's kit $12.00
Learners Packet $3.60
Publisher: Concordia Publishing House

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The series covers selected Bible stories. These are: The Boy Jesus in the Temple, Jesus and the Children, Jesus is Born, The Wise Men Come to See Jesus, Good Friday, Easter Day, The Good Samaritan, Zacchaeus, Creation, Feeding the 5,000, Jesus Visits Mary and Martha, Palm Sunday, and Ascension. (The stories are presented in that sequence.) The material is planned aseither initial instruction or as reinforcement learning of these stories and the related concepts. The material is not organized to distinguish which activities are appropriate for initial instruction or practice. Specific skills, goals, objectives or purposes are not spelled out. The sequence is strange and even the teacher's guide notes that the sequence may not be relevant and the teacher may wish to substitute unrelated materials. It is stated that each unit should cover 2 lessons in 3 class sessions. It does not really cover how you divide them into equal coverage for the sessions.

There is an emphasis on God's care and love rather than His judgement. The stories presented are fine, the the sequence is not useful. The specific skills needed to understand the concepts are not given. The "scope and sequence" chart is very confueing and not at all helpful.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIALS

The materials consist of eight sets of materials. The teachers kit for each set contains two flannelgraph sets, (one for each Bible story), standup figures, a 7" LP record that tells a Bible story and helps present a related song and hymn, a filmstrip and teachers guide. The learners packet for each set contains 36 teaching pictures, (16 full color drawings, 2 one-color line drawings, and 18 black and white photos.) The filmstrips are clear and easily recognized presentations of the stories. They can easily be used as supplementary material for teaching the stories or independently. The teaching pictures are the same as the pictures in the filmstrips which is good for reviewing the events of the story. These are to be taken home by the learner and are there consumable. The pieces cannot be purchased independently. The box in which the teacher's materials come is more than adequate to hold all the materials for the entire class. The teaching pictures, filmstrips, etc. can be used by the teacher to meet special needs of the learners, but there are no suggestions given to help her do this.

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

The stated level of the materials is "visual and auditory materials for work with mentally retarded at the trainable level of above". No reading level is given. All sets appear to be at the same level. The related modern pictures show teenagers in various settings. No age level is stated.

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V. QUALITY

The paper, filmstrips, and pictures are of good and durable quality. The print on the student pages appears to be for the benefit of the teacher rather than the learner. The illustrations are clear and relevant to the content. They add to the instruction. The cost is reasonable for what you get.

VI. FORMAT

The format of the learner's materials is fair. The format of the Teacher's Guide is confusing. There is an assumption that the teacher will use activities that are relevant and helpful to her students. The material is not easy to follow. Projector, flannelboard, slot chart, and record player are required. Other materials for suggested projects may or may not be readily available. The teaching procedures are not clear. There is no evaluation procedures built into the unit plans.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

There are additional recordings of songs, devotional books, an arts and crafts narrated filmstrip. There are no placement tests, resource files, of objective clusters. There is a teacher's guide but no teacher training materials other than the arts and craft filmstrip.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

The plan is for each set to cover 12 class sessions (one calendar quarter). The materials can be used for a differing schedule of classes. The teacher is expected to select activities appropriate to the situation in which she finds herself.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA.

There is no research of field test data given.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The lessons rely on an audio-visual approach to tell the message. The theoretical concept on which the lessons are based is "As you teach persons how much God loves them you change their lives permanemtly." The materials are weak in both the curricular and teacher ends of the curricular-student-teacher triad. A primary problem is in the strange sequencing. Parts of the materials, ie, story sections of the filmstrips, are very compatible with other ongoing instructions. There is no indication of substntiation supplied.

The materials are written from a Lutheran perspective and the related stories and pictures are in Lutheran settings. There are a variety of activities suggested. These involve seeing, hearing, making, group activities, and singing.

SUMMARY

These materials have excellent filmstrips and good matching pictures for the learners. The teacher's guide is confusing and the sequence of stories is neither chronological nor sequential.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: Primary Bible Study Guide New Life in Christ
Author: Board for Parish Education Staff
Copyright: September 1982
Price: Teachers packet $4.75
Teachers Guide $2.50
Bible Study Guide $1.85
Student activity packet $1.85
Story Time $1.50
Publisher: Concordia Publishing House

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Each set of materials covers one quarter of the year which is part of a three year cycle of Bible stories covering the key events of the Old and New Testaments. The same story is taught each Sunday from the Nursery through grade 8. The material is intended as initial presentation at the earlier grade levels and as practice and deeper understanding of the same stories at later grade levels. There is no material specifically for remediation. The material addresses some of the skills needed. The student materials appear to require entrance skills above the stated level. The Bible stories are arranged chronologically from Creation through the history of the early church (Book of Acts). The pivotal New Testament events of the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Spirit are stucied every year during the Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter, and Pentecost seasons. All materials are dated. Teachers do not need to shift lessons to fit, for example, the changing date of Easter. Each lesson is already in proper sequence. All materials are clearly marked for date of use. While key Bible narratives from the life of Jesus are included each year at church festivals, the other stories are covered during the three year cycle once each cycle.

The material emphasizes God's care and love and His concern for every individual. It's references to God's justice and righteousness are suitable to most learners. There is an emphasis on God's mercy rahter than His power. It shows Jesus as loving and concerned with all persons. Concepts are worked on, but the specific skills needed to learn these concepts are not spelled out. There is no scope and sequence chart.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

There are several books, leaflets, and activity packets for each learner and teacher, but not other pieces of materials that could be used independently. The books are consumable. Each book is purchased independently. It might be difficult to modify the books to meet specific learner needs. Since lessons are on the same topic at each level, it might be possible to use materials from a lower level for students having touble at a more advanced grade level. High priority is placed on reading, writing, and other verbal skills.

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

The publisher states the materials are graded as nursery, kindergarten, primary (grade 1 and 2), junior (grade 3 and 4), Preteen (grade 5 and 6), Junior High (grade 7 and 8). However the real reading levels are consistently higher than the stated level. Primary books are at a third grade reading level and Junior books vary from third to seventh grade reading levels. Some of the reading in the Preteen books is at tenth and eleventh grade reading levels.

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There is no apparent attempt to control the use of content-specific vocabulary. The interest level of the content, pictures, and stories is above the publisher's stated level for the material. The materials are very difficult for the stated ages (first and second grade). It is not realistic to expect the learner to be able to read or write at the level used in the primary study guide.

V. QUALITY

The material is of good quality. The books, filmstrips, and pictures are good and durable. The print is clear, but smaller and closer together than would be expected in primary materials. The illustrations are clear and relevant to the content. They would also be relevant for older children. They add to rather than detract from the instruction. The stories are well written, interesting and accurate. The cost is reasonable for what you get.

VI. FORMAT

The format of workbooks, pictures, charts, filmstrips, and records is appropriate. It utilizes primarily the auditory and visual modes of communication. The material is clear and easy to follow. Audio-visual aquipment is required to use the special resources such as tapes, filmstrips, or records. There are clear directions for teaching procedures. It is sometimes assumed that the learner has more background and knowledge than is realistic, however. Teachers are given a variety of choices for materials and procedures for developing the units. There are suggestions for on going evaluation of student progress.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

There are additional components beyond the child-use instructional items. The teacher's packet includes an assortment of visual and audio resources - cards, pictures, charts, records, etc. - to help teachers. The teacher's guide outlines the teacher's plan for every Sunday. It explains the children's Bible study guide and suggests good discussion techniques. A Bible commentary is included as a center insert in each Teacher's Guide. Additional filmstrips are also available. There is a departmental guide for teacher training.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

While the date of each session is specified, there is no time frame indicated for activities or sessions. Depending on the length of the class session, there may be enough or more than enough material to allow for selection and flexibility in scheduling. Time requirements are not given for teacher preparation, class length or student preparation.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

The material says that the materials are "time-tested", but there is no data given.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The organizing principle of the materials is Bible history correlated with the major church-year festivals. The purpose intended for the materials is that they are designed to help the teacher share the new life that comes through faith in Christ.

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The material meets the curricular-student-teacher triad. It is compatible with other on going instruction. As with most Christian education materials, they have not been researched scientifically. The activities and concepts are from a Lutheran perspective. Activities imvolve seeing, hearing, making, dramatizing, and singing. There are also suggestions for both group and individual activities.

SUMMARY

The New Life in Christ materials are a complete Sunday School curriculum for children from nursery school through grade 8. It is based on a comprehensive 3-year cycle of Bible stories which includes Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost lessons according to the church year calendar. It provides uniform lessons with worship themes between levels and provides Bible commentary for the teacher's learning also. The problem is that the materials are written at a more difficult reading level than would be indicated by the publishers.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: Breakthrough: Getting Into the "New Life in Christ" Series
Author: Robert Schweitzer, Editor
Copyright: Spring 1983
Price: free
Publisher: Bethesda Lutheran Home

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Breakthrough publishes quarterly helps for supplementing and adapting the "New Life in Christ" (NLIC) Sunday School lessons and teacher aids for use in special classes on an on going basis. The materials provide the following:

1. Adaptation of specific NLIC materials.
2. Guidlines as to appropriateness of stories for various age and ability levels, with supplemental ideas for different life situations.
3. Sources for additional pictures.
4. Sources for related songs and hymns.
5. Listings of other materials containing the same story or related activities.

In producing the NLIC helps, Breakthrough tries to meet the following needs:

1. Language and vocabulary which is appropriate for varying abilities.
2. Age appropriate or age-neutral pictures and learning activities.
3. Repetition.
4. Reduced scope.
5. Involvement-based learning.

The materials are coordinated with the entire three year cycle covering the Old and New Testaments. They are published at the same time as the materials of NLIC so the teacher may benefit from any staff instruction provided for all teachers. The Breakthrough materials present initial instruction, remediation, and practice activities for the needed skills. It addresses the levels of skills needed to understand the concepts and suggests ways to teach these in an appropriate sequence. It emphasizes God's love , care, concern and help rather than his justice. It does not provide a scope and sequence chart for the entire cycle.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

The Breakthrough materials are simply a series of news letters which correspond with the materials in NLIC. They list the materials needed from that series. For example, the following is quoted from Breakthrough Vol. 3. No. 2:

"You will need to obtain (or have access to) a basic set of preprimary and Primary level materials for each upcoming quarter. A basic set includes the following materials beginning with the most necessary:

1) The 3 Student Activity Packets - Primary, Kindergarten, Nursery.
2) The Kindergarten leaflet set.
3) The Primary Student Guide.
4) The Primary Teacher Packet.
5) The primary Teacher Guide.
6) The Kindergarten Teacher Packet.
7) The Preprimary Teacher Guide.
8) The Nursery Teacher Packet."

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The Breakthrough lesson plans then draw freely from all of these plus additional materials that are either suggested or supplied in the newletter iteslf. Any or all of the materials can be used independently. It could be used to supplement other material on the same Bible story. Since it is basically teacher suggestions and helps. It is not directly consumable by the students. Keeping track of all the suggested materials could be difficult.

There are many suggestions for modifying materials and for selecting ones appropriate to the needs and response modalities of the learners.

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

Reading levels are discussed from non-readers to fourth grade. The teadher is expected to select the level that is appropriate for her learners. Suggestions are given for controling the language levels, reading levels , and activities for high interest and low language input. There is an effort to make all lessons appropriate to the chronological ages, levels of comprehension, ranges of skills, and special needs of diverse learners. These efforts seem to be realistic.

V. QUALITY

Breakthrough is printed on good quality paper. The print and pictures are clear and easy to see. Both drawings and photographs are relevant and helpful. The material is well written and easy to follow. Songs are in clear and large notation that is easy to read.

VI. FORMAT

The format is appropriate. Suggestions are made for using many teaching and learning modalities. Suggestions for use in varied environments are given. Many choices are provided for developing each unit. There is no evaluation procedure.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

In one sense the whole thing is "support Material". The material is really extensive teacher helps to using other material that should be readily available.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

Student tasks are of an appropriate length. There is plenty of material for flexibility. Teacher preparation would take somewhat longer than with many material because she must find materials from many sources and prepare these for many levels of students.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

These materials have grown out of teacher experience. They are not field tested or researched scientifically.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The goal of the material is to provide a curriculum rich in appropriate, effective, readily usable teaching approaches which are combined with visual aids for teacheng Bible stories to persons who are disabled. Beyond that the theoretical basis is not stated.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: Bible Lessons for Special Classes - Series Two (Christian Faith Series)
Author: Arnold C. Mueller
Copyright: 1969
Price: $1.90 per packet in 1982. (Eight packets for complete set for one student for course)
Publisher: Concordia Publishing House

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

This series covers the content area of Luther's Small Catechism. It is designed for initial instruction of adolescents in catechetical instruction, but who have had a background of previous church and Sunday School experience. It includes remediation and practice activities for the learner. It addresses the specific concepts needed. There is an appropriate sequence of concepts taught. Not all concepts have equal stress, but this is appropriate as more important ones receive the most coverage. There is an appropriate distinction between law and Gospel. Emphasis is on God's care and love and his concern for every individual, but there is also an appropriate amount of time spent on the meaning and implication of the ten commandments. Larger concepts are broken down into the basic components where this is possible. There is a sort of "scope and sequence" chart listing the parts of the catechism covered, the related Bible stories, and the key concepts.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

The series consists of eight packets of materials. The lessons are in the form of 8-page leaflets, each leaflet providing material for two or more lessons. Each leaflet contains some simple doctrinal statements, a short Bible verse and prayer. It also contains pictures to demonstrate the lesson, a hymn stanza, a related Bible story, and some applications of the lesson truch to the lives of the student. Six of the leaflets are packaged in one packet along with a teacher-parent manual. Any of the leaflets or pages from them can be used independently. They could also be used to illustrate these concepts on other classes. They are comsumable. Packets are purchased independently, but not leaflets. As they are atandard 8½ x 11 inches they are easy to file or keep in a notebook. They can be modified for use with individual learners.

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

The publisher does not state the reading level of the material. (I have found that students reading at a third grade level can read it with occasional prompts.) There are suggestions for practice and drills that are geared for the student who is having trouble reading the material. It is written in large (primary or sight-saving size) print. It is consistent throughout the material. There is limited redundancy between packets on key concepts. There is an attempt to control content-specific vocabulary. The interest level is appropriate to the content, pictures and publisher's statement of the level for which the materials are written. The materials are appropriate for youth with about third grade comprehension skills or above. Students with some visual impairment coud also see the materials. The purpose is realistic to the needs of the learners.

V. QUALITY

The paper is of good and durable quality. The print is clear and large in size. The illustrations are clear and relevant to the content. They are also age-appropriate. They add to rather than detract from the lesson. The stories are well written and accurate. The cost is reasonable.

VI. FORMAT

The format of leaflets is usable with youth. It utilizes the reading skills the student has. If you happen to have a student who is completely turned off by reading this would not be a good format for him/her. The teacher's book suggests many additional activities and materials to use with the basic leaflet. An emphasis on these rather than the leaflet might be called for with some learners. Others will enjoy the leaflet. The material is clear and easy to follow. The format is consistent throughout. It could be used with no special equipment or special environmental limitations. There are clear directions for teaching procedures. A variety of choices are provided for developing the units. Methods of evaluation are suggested.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

The teacher's book contains many helpful suggestions, background material, descriptions of the learner's material and ideas that could be used in teaching. There is an assumption that the teacher will have access to additional pictures, filmstrips, etc. that are not provided.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

The material is designed for two sessions on each leaflet. The teacher's book notes that in field tests some teachers reported that they found it desirable to use each leaflet up to five sessions. Great flexibility is possible.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

From comments (as noted above) there was field testing. The publisher does not offer any data on reliability or validity.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The lessons are based on the "reduction principle," which asserts that difficult and complex ideas can be simplified radically. Christian doctrine need not be changed, but it often needs to be presented in its simplest terms. The objective of "growth in faith" is paramount; a second objective, "growth in the fruits of faith" is also important. The approach meets the needs of the curricular-student-teacher triad. It is compatible with other instruction. The content is specifically Lutheran. A variety of teaching methods are used in the suggested activities. these suggest doing, seeing, making, and singing. The material can be used in either a group or on an individual basis. Most teachers would find the material familiar and comfortable.

SUMMARY:

This is an excellent simple catechetical series for the learner who has some minimal reading skills. It will not work with a student who resists the idea of even looking at a paper.

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I. BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title: You and Me, God
Author: Frederick A Radtke (prepared under the auspices of the coordinating committee for cooperative projects in congregational life) ALC, LCA, LC-MS
Copyright: 1981
Publisher: Concordia Publishing House (also Augsburg Publishing House and Fortress Press)
Price: Teachers Kit $29.95 Student take home sheets $2.00

II. INSTRUCTIONAL AREA AND SKILLS SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

This course covers the area of Christian doctrine expressed in the Ten Commandments, the Apostles Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and Hold Communion. It also stresses the forgiveness of sins although not as specifically the Office of the Keys. It does not do this in the same order or with the same degree of emphasis as Luther's Small Catechism, however. It presents the material as initial instruction for a person who has had contact with the worshiping community in his/her experience. It spends much time on practice and reinforcement activities. It addresses evaluation of where the student is and what he/she is learning as you go along. It addresses the specific skills needed to move from one step to the next in instruction. The sequence has been well thought out and moves from familiar to unfamiliar. More important skills are given more coverage than less important ones. There is very strong emphasis on God's love and care and His concern for every individual. The Administration Guide states, "low-functioning persons know that they are put down by other human beings and often regard themselves as failures. It would be devastating for them to go through the entire Ten Commandments at the beginning of the course being constantly impressed with their unworthiness. These students, who need only a minimal reminder of their need for a loving Savior, need more help in finding ways to serve the Savior and others, help in living according to what we usually call the Third Use of the Law." There is a scope and sequence chart of what is being taught.

III. COMPONENT PARTS OF THE MATERIAL

The material consists of: 1. The Administration Guide for Teachers
2. The Teachers Guide (with instructions for conducting 36 sessions)
3. Three fimstrips (one for each quarter, containing visuals for each lesson)
4. Arts and Crafts filmstrip (suggested projects)
5. Recorded marration for arts and crafts.
6. Take Home Sheets (one for each lesson)

These materials can be used together, independently, or for other lessons on the same subject matter. They are very versatile. Only the Take Home Sheets are consumable. The materials are easily modified for use with differing levels of learners. Responses can be in whatever modality is appropriate for your students.

IV. LEVEL OF THE MATERIAL

No reading is required. The learner should be able to see the filmstrip. There is an effort to control the vocabulary used and to use as many different modes of experience to teach the lesson as possible. The level is appropriate to the content, pictures, and publisher's statements. The materials are suited to adolescents who have no reading skills, limited language skills, or need instruction that does not rely on the printed format. The purposes are realistic to many special need students.

V. QUALITY

The paper and filmstrips are of excellent quality. Pictures are clear and do not have a "busy" background. They are relevant to the lessons and add greatly. Cost is reasonable.

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VI. FORMAT

The format is very useful with the non-reader. It uses appropriate receptive and expressive modes of communication for the learner. The materials are clear and easy to follow. Additional equipment needed include a filmstrip projector, screen, "glad rags" for dramatizing the stories, materials for crafts, and sufficient space to do the projects. Very adequate directions are given for teachers, a large variety of choices are suggested for materials and procedures for every unit. There is an evaluation procedure build into the umit plan and explained in the teacher's books.

VII. SUPPORT MATERIALS

The teachers packet is complete with an unusual supply of support materials. These have been noted in the listing of component parts. In addition to the obvious, the Administration Guide also insluces: Thoughts on confirming and communing the low-functioning student, organizing a class, organizing parents, theory and soggestions on teaching, course content, evaluation of students, and extensive bibliography, arts and crafts, and songs.

VIII. TIME REQUIREMENTS

Time requirements for activities are given. The teacher can choose those that are appropriate to her situation. A great deal of flexibility is expected in scheduling and teaching the lessons.

IX. FIELD TEST AND RESEARCH DATA

There is no information given on field testing or research data.

X. METHOD, APPROACH, OR THEORETICAL BASES

The material describes itself as "Not the ordinary" in the methods used to teach the course. The chief methods used are: 1) the teaching filmstrip - to identify people, events, and as sequential posters to illustrate the story.
2) Tableau, imitation, and roleplay - to dramatize the lesson.
3) Sensory learning - varied experiences, adapted to the individual, and connected with the lesson's central truth or goal.
4) Singing - rhythm, tune, and eventually words and concepts.
5) Take home sheets - to use at home with parents of guardians in on going activities
6) Worship - opportunity for the learner to participate more fully in the mission and ministry of the Church.

This variety of methods is used to enable the congregation to meet its educational ministry to the special learner. These materials are based on the belief that "Confirmation is a lifelong pastoral and educational ministry of the church that helps the baptized person, through Word and Sacrament, to identify more deeply with the Christian community and to participate more fully in its mission and ministry." (Administration Guide. p.4)

The methods used in this material meet the needs of the curricular-student-teacher triad. It is compatable with other instruction. The material is Lutheran in scope and understanding. The large variety of metbods include activities of doing, seeing, making, dramatizing, experienceing, using all senses, participating in a group, working as individuals, singing, and using repitition and routine. The teacher should be creative and free to try new things to be comfortable with this material.

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DISCUSSION:

The above evaluations of two series for teaching the Life of Christ, three series of whole Bible Study, and two series on Confirmation Preparation give examples of the most frequently used categories of Christian Education for children and adolescents with special learning needs. These particular materials are from a Protestant or Lutheran tradition. There are also materials available and in use from the Roman Catholic tradition. Among these are "SPRED", 'REACH", and such things as "The Age Group Objectives of Religious Education - Special Education" from the Archdiocese of Detroit. "REACH" & "SPRED" are comprehensive teacher training and curriculum for special education in religion. "The Age Group Objectives" is a comprehensive scope and sequence chart covering Catechetical training for: deaf children from ages 4 through 17, Educable Retarded from 4 to 17, and the Trainable Retarded from 4 to 17.

While there are many teacher made materials for Christian Education and many books dealing with the subjects of starting classes of the need to include all children and exclude none in the educational ministry of the church, the above selected materials give a place to begin in selecting materials. They are also typical of closely related materials that were not specifically evaluated here. For example, Breakthrough not only had a curriculum adapting the NLIC material, it has a Confirmation Preparation series and an introductory Bible study series. These are written with the format and types of suggestions as the series described and evaluated. CEF materials also produces other Bible studies besides the Life of Christ, All of the Old and New Testament are covered, there are Mission stories and series on people whose lives are good examples of faith in Jesus. These also follow the same format of the series evaluated.

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